



PRESS RELEASE

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Lieutenant Governor McConnell Recognizes May as Older Americans Month *(updated 12:45 p.m.)*

COLUMBIA, S.C. - Since 1963, communities across the nation have joined in the annual commemoration of Older Americans Month, a proud tradition that demonstrates our nation's commitment to celebrating the contributions and achievements of older Americans. On May 7, 2012, Older Americans Month will be celebrated with a Senior Expo and Fun Day to be held from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., at the Drew Wellness Center, located at 2101 Walker Solomon Way, in Columbia. Sponsors of the event include the Drew Wellness Center, Columbia Parks and Recreation, the Columbia Housing Authority, and the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging.

The event is open to the public and will promote wellness and recreation through events such as cooking demonstrations, water aerobics, and bingo. T-shirts will be given away to the first 200 seniors present.

The theme for Older Americans Month 2012 - *Never Too Old to Play!* - casts a spotlight on the important role older adults play in sharing their experience, wisdom, and understanding. This year's celebrations will recognize the value that older adults continue to bring to our communities through spirited participation in social and faith groups, service organizations, and other activities.

"This event provides the perfect opportunity to show our appreciation for older adults within our community who have contributed so much throughout their lives," says Lieutenant Governor Glenn McConnell. "While we are kicking-off the recognition in Columbia, I want to encourage regional offices throughout our state to show their appreciation for older Americans in their respective communities." Governor Haley and Mayor Benjamin of Columbia have also recognized the many contributions of senior adults by proclaiming May as "Older Americans Month" in South Carolina.

Studies show that interactions with family, friends, and neighbors across generations enrich the lives of everyone involved. Young people who have significant relationships with a grandparent or an elder report that these relationships helped shape their values, goals, and life choices and give them a sense of identity and roots. In addition, lifelong participation in social, creative, and physical activities has proven health benefits, including retaining mobility, muscle mass, and cognitive abilities.

While the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging and the Aging Network provide services, support, and resources to older Americans year-round, Older Americans Month is a great opportunity to show special appreciation for some of our most beloved citizens. We have many reasons to celebrate them.

For more information on the event, contact Crystal Strong at 734-9889 or Kim Mitchell at 545-3117.

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